

No. 4.

PAPERS FROM THE SOCIETY

FOR THE

Diffusion of Political Knowledge.

THE LETTER OF A REPUBLICAN,

EDWARD N. CROSBY, Esq.,

OF POUGHKEEPSIE,

To PROF. S. F. B. MORSE, FEB. 25, 1863,

AND

Prof. MORSE'S REPLY,

MARCH 2d, 1863.

"Law—her seat is the bosom of God, her voice is the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very *least* as feeling her *care*, the *greatest* as not exempted from her *power*."—RICHARD HOOKER.

"What constitutes a State?

MEN who their *duties* know,

But know their *rights*, and knowing dare maintain.

And SOVEREIGN LAW, *that State's collected will*,

Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill."

—SIR WILLIAM JONES.

PRESIDENT, PROF. S. F. B. MORSE,

SECRETARY, WM. McMURRAY,

TREASURER, LORING ANDREWS,

OFFICE OF THE SOCIETY,

No. 13 PARK ROW, NEW-YORK.

C. MASON, Cor. Sec'y,

To whom all communications may be addressed.

READ—DISCUSS—DIFFUSE.

Resolved, That it be recommended to all citizens in the various cities, counties, and villages of this and other States, who approve of the objects expressed in this Constitution, that they organize auxiliary societies, and open communication with the New-York Society, for the purpose of procuring and circulating our papers.

LETTER FROM EDWARD N. CROSBY, ESQ.

TROY, Feb. 25th, 1863.

PROF. S. F. B. MORSE:

MY DEAR AND RESPECTED SIR: I have read with deep interest the letter in the N. Y. Evening *Post* of the 19th inst., addressed to you by Mr. D. D. Field. Its general tenor harmonizes with views which I have long coveted the privilege of expressing to you, but which have been repressed by a constitutional feeling of respect for eminence and seniority, and a fear of even seeming officiously to intrude. But, as Mr. Field suggests, your fame has become a national inheritance, and this alike is a motive and an apology for a jealous care on the part of your fellow-citizens as to aught that may impair its lustre. It is the omissions, however, rather than the contents of Mr. Field's sensible and temperate letter that prompt me to speak. While appealing to you on many high grounds, still he fails to reach the highest from which the subject is to be viewed. And I trust it is not assuming too much for one who is not only an admiring fellow-countryman and a near neighbor, but also a Christian friend, to discuss this matter with you from the Christian's stand-point. And what, may I ask, appears to you the sufficient reason for a Christian citizen to ally himself with others, for the extreme and radical purpose of undermining or paralyzing the power of the Government at a crisis when unanimity of support is so plainly essential, not only to the welfare but to the very life of the nation?

There are many, alas! who from ignorance or passion, persistently confound all the immense party, which came into being and into power only on the grand purpose of resisting Southern aggression, with the extremist radicalism and infidelity of the Garrison stamp. They would thus justify themselves in an in-

discriminate and reckless hostility to the policy of the Government. I can, of course, find in this fact no explanation of the deliberate action of one of your principles and intelligence. Some may say that "the war on our part is unrighteous and, therefore, unworthy of support." But the rebels began it. To this it may be said: "The provocations offered them were such as greatly to diminish if not remove their criminality in thus beginning it." These assertions, though easily refuted, might require a discussion both long and foreign somewhat to my purpose. But it may be said that "the war though righteous is waged by unrighteous methods, such as confiscation and more particularly emancipation." If, however, it is a legitimate function of our Government to destroy the fabric of the Southern Confederacy, *à fortiori*, is it not justified in removing that which their own highest authorities pronounce to be the *corner-stone* of that fabric? Moreover, though this position is as palpably untenable as the two previously stated, yet supposing it to be a sincere Christian conviction, inasmuch as these methods must be objected to rather as inexpedient than as morally and legally unjustifiable, should not another Christian conviction, that of duty to the "powers that are ordained of God," prevent any disposition to resist or thwart the Government? But I would fain suppose that rather than either of the above, the grounds of your political views and action have been an earnest desire for peace, and an abomination of war, and its attendant horrors. In both of these feelings I claim the fullest sympathy with you, and yet I can not possibly construct upon them a fulcrum for unfriendly action against our Government.

I have seen in the progress of events

much to criticise and regret in the Administration, but I feel assured that as far at least as our President is concerned, the errors have been those of the judgment, and are compatible with a pure integrity and a high-toned patriotism. Horrible too as war is, we are to remember that it may yet be a worthy means to a worthy end. God has certainly in his word more directly and repeatedly given his sanction to it, than he has to slavery. But what is the legitimate, the inevitable tendency of such unfriendly demonstrations as those to which you were persuaded to give countenance at Delmonico's, and which have had a fuller but natural development in Connecticut and elsewhere? We are not left to theories for a reply. Facts show that while the rebel leaders insultingly spurn all pusillanimous overtures of conciliation, they also exult over them as evidences of divided counsels and increasing feebleness at the North. They are thereby emboldened to declare themselves utterly implacable, except by success in their own ruinous plans. What then should be our necessary logic, our irresistible inference? Certainly patriotism and a wise appreciation of the worthy end and the abundant means committed

to us would decide at once. Let us by united and courageous effort show the rebels that their success is perfectly hopeless. May I venture to speak a word also as to the "*personnel*" in these matters? Mr. Field says that he knows personally nearly all of those who were associated with you at Delmonico's, and implies very plainly that they borrowed from your presence a respectability for which they could make no becoming return. It was on a previous public occasion, that I saw, with no slight regret, your good name published, as appearing on the same platform with the characterless —, the infamous —, and the pitiable —. Can it be that the purest and most patriotic measures draw to their advocacy such persons, while they fail to attract the innumerable host who dissent, and whose patriotism and probity you can not but heartily commend?

The high estimate I have formed of your Christian character, confirmed and increased by my intercourse with —, has encouraged me to speak with the more freedom, and with the hope that it will be received in the same kindly spirit which has prompted it.

Yours most sincerely and respectfully,
EDWARD N. CROSBY.

PROF. MORSE'S REPLY.

NEW-YORK, March 2d, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR: Yours of the 25th of February is received, and I take in good part, what you say, written, however, wholly under misconception of my opinions, my position, and the objects for which the Society for the Diffusion of Political Knowledge has been organized. I know from your estimable character that your intention and motives were of the most benevolent kind in addressing me, and in reply, I shall make a few remarks, I trust in the same kindly spirit, while on the subjects you introduce I use perfect plainness of speech.

Your letter touches on many topics, upon some of which I have, for years, bestowed much study, and it may be that a frank discussion of them at a time

when the public mind is alive to such discussions, may be useful in eliciting truth. Fundamental difference of opinion is often more seeming than real, perhaps from the inherent imperfection of language itself, in conveying our real thoughts to another's mind, or through some defect of intellect or education in not using perspicuous language. If due weight were given to a consideration of this kind, there would be less of that asperity of remark upon other's misconceptions, which in this day of excitement deforms the popular style. Mere difference of opinion, honestly entertained, is entitled to that forbearance which is denied to brazen-faced, persistent falsehood.

I can account for your misconception

of the purpose of our Society, as well as of many other topics upon which you have written, only on the presumption that you ground your remarks on the assumed truth of the egregiously false and impudent representations of an unprincipled reporter of the *Evening Post*. If this was the source of your information, you might as well look for truth respecting Bible doctrine, from Voltaire or Thomas Paine. Are you not aware that the pretended report of the incipient meeting at Delmonico's which led to the formation of our Society, is a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end, exposed and refuted in numerous journals? Of how many falsehoods, persistently repeated, must a journal be convicted before its statement of facts shall be received with suspicion? I need not say to you that the admission into the *Evening Post* of such a grossly abusive report, while entertaining as I have hitherto, for its senior editor, so much personal respect, (however much I may differ from him politically,) is a source of deep mortification to me.

MR. FIELD'S LETTER.

Mr. Field's letter addressed to me was probably indited under the influence of impressions made by that same infamous report, and while I have no complaint of want of courtesy on his part towards me personally, I saw nothing in its general tenor of sufficient importance to require any answer from me. Though addressed to me, it was evidently addressed to the public through me, and I was used only as a convenient mode of addressing the public. So far as any thing he said required notice, that notice was taken of it by several journals. I enclose you clippings from two which happen to be at hand. Whatever personal regard I have for Mr. Field and for his highly respectable family connections, the state of the country compels me to waive all consideration of social relations, in treating of its political condition. His views and mine on the subject of the policy of the Administration are antipodal, and in view of his reported action in the Peace Congress, in connection with some of his radical associates, to which action can be traced

the present awful condition of the country, since it was in their power (if I have been rightly advised) to have averted the war, I cannot but look upon his and their political course as laying upon them a weight of responsibility which I would not have upon my conscience for a thousand worlds.

CHRISTIAN STAND-POINT.

You desire "to discuss the subject from the Christian's stand-point." I accede to this the more readily since that is precisely the stand-point from which I have always endeavored to view the whole field of controversy. On Bible truth, therefore, I am ready to plant every position I take.

Did it not lead me into too long a discussion for a letter like this, a discussion starting from a point too far back, even from fundamental theological principles, I should like to establish with you this stand-point impregnably on the Bible. This will have to be done ere the perverted Christian mind of the country can be disabused of the ruinous fallacies which have turned aside the incumbents of so many pulpits from their legitimate duty of allaying the fierce passions of men, through the tranquillizing influences of the gospel of peace, and changed them into impassioned political orators, whose exasperating harangues have added fuel to the already raging fires of a ferocious and desolating fanaticism.* Such a discussion, important as it is, must be in abeyance.

I proceed to answer your question: "What appears to you the sufficient reason for a Christian citizen to ally himself with others for the extreme and radical purpose of undermining or paralyzing the power of the Government at a crisis when unanimity of support is so plainly essential not only to the welfare but to the very life of the nation?"

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

I will analyze the component parts of your question. You assume, without any warrant, that my purpose is to "undermine and paralyze the power of

* See note A.

the Government." You appear to have fallen into the prevalent error of confounding the *Government* with the *Administration* of the Government. You are too sensible not to see that they are not the same. The word *Government* has indeed two meanings, and in order to rescue the subject from ambiguity allow me to say that the ordinary meaning of Government, in free countries, is, that form of fundamental *rules* and *principles* by which a nation or state is governed, or by which *individual members* of a body politic are to *regulate their action*. Government is in fact a *Constitution* by which the rights and duties both of *citizens* and *public officers* are *prescribed* and *defined*. If the word sometimes has a secondary or more limited meaning synonymous with *Administration* of public affairs, then "*the Government*" is metonymically used for *Administration*, and should not be confounded with the original and true signification of the term *Administration*, which means the *persons collectively* who are intrusted with the execution of the laws, and with the superintendence of public affairs.

Opposition to the *Administration* then, is not opposition to the *Government*; the former may not only be utterly destroyed without affecting the health of the Government, but it may be, and constantly is, thought to be necessary, in the opinion of the supreme power, *the People*, to destroy the *Administration* in order to preserve the life of the Government. This is in accordance not only with the theory of our institutions, but with the daily practice of the people. Every change of *Administration* at every election, Federal, State, or municipal, great or small, exemplifies this great truth. The Government remains intact, unscathed, while the *Administration* is swept out of existence.

In the light of this explication, you must perceive that so far from "allying myself with others for the purpose of undermining and paralyzing the power of the Government," the very purpose of our Society is to uphold and strengthen the Government, by diffusing among the people, such a knowledge of the

principles upon which it is founded, that it shall not be in the power of any Administration, whether weak or wicked, to work its injury.

I yield to no man, in hearty *loyalty* to the *Government*, nor in obedience also to the Administration in all its *constitutional* measures, whatever may be my private opinion of their wisdom. You mistake me if you suppose I have any "radical purpose of undermining or paralyzing" any of its legal measures. If I think them unwise, I shall use my constitutional liberty to say so, and if the Administration transcends the power intrusted to it by the People, I shall endeavor to point out their error, not in a contumacious or unkind spirit, but nevertheless firmly. To the standard of the *Constitution*, and the *Union* under it, of all the United States I shall cling as the only *political* hope of the country, our only defence against anarchy and despotism.

WHAT MUST WE SUPPORT?

But you say "unanimity of support is essential to the very life of the nation." Support of what? Laws and acts subversive of the Government? Laws and acts in direct and palpable contravention of the Constitution? Laws and acts outside of the Constitution? Where in the fundamental law of the Government, the Constitution, does the President, one of the administrators of the Supreme Law, find his authority for his *emancipation proclamation*? Where for his usurpation of the power to suspend the *habeas corpus*? Where for the confiscation acts? Where for his authority to arrest and incarcerate citizens? These are all acts of the *Administration*, not of the *Government*; they are acts subversive of the Government; acts that are "paralyzing and undermining" the Government; acts that are dividing the people of the North, alarming them for the safety of the Constitution, the Government, and arousing them to call their servants, the Administrators, to account.

It is on such a confounding of terms as this, of *government* and *administration*, that you charge "extreme and radical purposes" upon those who rally in support of the Government.

NECESSITY FOR OUR SOCIETY.

You must excuse me, dear sir, if I say that your letter, to so great an extent based upon the popular fallacies of the day, is itself a proof of the necessity of just such a Society as we have formed; because if minds like yours, intelligent, reflective, ingenuous, and conscientious, are so much at fault on the fundamental principles of our institutions, what must be inferred of the minds of others less intelligent, who imbibe their opinions, and mould their actions, from the prejudiced and befogged intellects controlling the fanatical avenues to public opinion?

CHARACTER OF ABOLITIONISM.

By the manner in which you allude to the "extreme radicalism and infidelity of the Garrison stamp," I am glad to find we have a common stand-point from which to view a portion of the field. Look at that dark conclave of conspirators, freedom-shriekers, Bible-spurners, fierce, implacable, headstrong, denunciatory, Constitution and Union haters, noisy, factious, breathing forth threatenings and slaughter against all who venture a difference of opinion from them, murderous, passionate advocates of imprisonments and hangings, bloodthirsty, and if there is any other epithet of atrocity found in the vocabulary of wickedness, do they not every one fitly designate some phase of radical abolitionism?

DISTINCTION BETWEEN ABOLITIONISTS
AND REPUBLICANS IMPOSSIBLE.

But you would have us make a distinction between these "radicals and infidels of the Garrison stamp," and the "immense party which," as you say, "came into being and into power only on the grand purpose of resisting Southern aggression."

Waiving the question you raise of the existence of any *Southern Aggression*, (previous to the last Presidential Election,) making resistance necessary on the part of the North, I ask you how can any distinction be made, between parties in close alliance, carrying out together and sustaining the same policy? Did not the Republican party, (in whose

ranks I recognize many excellent, intelligent, conscientious men,) did not, I say, that party, in the full consciousness of the diabolical character of that "radical and infidel" faction, form a political alliance with it for the purpose of obtaining the power which they now hold? The expectation in forming the coalition was doubtless that you would be able to control the numerically smaller wing of the alliance. You thought this possible; I did not. So soon as it was apparent that such an alliance had been formed, I predicted that the abolition wing would control the whole; and if the party thus formed were successful, the hopes of the country for Peace and Union would be wrecked; for it is the very nature of fanaticism to leaven the whole lump. Was I not right? I ask you now to look at the state of the country. Is it not true that the abolition element has acquired the control of that "immense party," of which you speak? Are you not advocating and supporting the abolition policy of the Administration? Is it not true that these very "radicals and infidels of the Garrison stamp," whom you justly loathe, have framed and passed the most offensive abolition measures that tinge the whole policy of the Administration? So notorious is this fact, that to ask is to answer the question. These then, are the men with whom I find you affiliated. May I not appropriately quote your own question, and ask: "Can it be that the purest and most patriotic measures draw to their advocacy such persons, while they fail to attract the innumerable host who dissent," etc.? But I will not do you the injustice thus to judge you by the standard by which you would judge me, for your standard is defective. Every one of any experience in political movements is aware that on both sides, in party excitements, there is every possible variety of character associating together, not because of other or general affinities, but for the single purpose of carrying a common measure, in which all feel more or less interest. Their several interests in that common measure may be as diverse as possible; some from high principle, some for the triumph of an

opinion, some to obtain office, some to obtain money. It is not, therefore, safe to characterize a cause by the character of some few who may be loud and forward in advocating it. Bad men may promote a good cause for bad ends. It is safest to judge of a cause on its own merits.

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION AND THE CORNER-STONE.

I am sorry to find you defending the President's *emancipation proclamation*. It is a measure which I have considered from the moment of its promulgation, unwise, unconstitutional and calamitous, productive of evil and only evil, a measure that, more than any other, has tended to divide the counsels of the North, and unite the South, and render the restoration of the national Union next to hopeless. Your defense of it rests on a fallacy. You say "If it is a legitimate function of our Government to destroy the fabric of the Southern Confederacy, *à fortiori*, is it not justified in removing that which their own highest authorities pronounce to be its *corner-stone*?" To answer your question intelligently, it is necessary to know the nature of that *corner-stone*, before we can pronounce whether the Government would be justified in removing or attempting to remove it. If the stone should happen to be a *providential fixture*, unalterable in its very nature by any thing that man can do, a condition of a *physical character*, not to be affected by any act of man, you will agree with me, that the Government would not be justified in making any such necessarily abortive and quixotic attempt. I presume from your question you have adopted the prevalent misunderstanding of a passage in Mr. Stevens's speech at Savannah, in which he speaks of the *corner-stone* of the Confederate Government. You assume that this corner-stone is *slavery*, and so our Government is justified in its measures to destroy slavery. Although a great multitude both in Europe and America entertain this stereotyped error, and it has within a few days been twice reiterated in the late non-intervention report of the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations, yet it is none the

less an egregious misapprehension of Mr. Stevens's remark, and a false assumption that the Confederate Government have adopted any such corner-stone. In the first place if Mr. Stevens had made such an announcement in his speech, (which he has not,) that would not constitute law for the Government. We do not look for the authority of the fundamental law of a government in a casual speech of any members of its administration, not even from the President, but in the fundamental law itself, in its written officially accepted Constitution. Now, there is not one word in the Constitution of the Confederacy that gives color to any such idea as slavery being the corner-stone of the Government; on the contrary, Section IX. Article I. clearly repudiates it. For if slavery is the adopted corner-stone of their Government, common-sense suggests, that in their fundamental law they would and should use every effort to strengthen and support it, and yet they forbid in that section and article that very policy which would give strength and permanency to such a corner-stone. Mr. Stevens, however, *has made no such declaration*, yet he is quoted every where as the source whence this widespread erroneous apothegm has proceeded. It may be well to ventilate this matter more thoroughly.

THE CORNER-STONE IS THE INEQUALITY OF THE TWO RACES.

Let us learn what Mr. Stevens actually did say. His language is this: "The foundations of our new Government are laid, its corner-stone rests upon"—what? slavery? no, "upon the *great truth* that *the negro is not equal to the white man*, that slavery "which he then defines to be, "subordination to the superior race, is his natural and moral condition. This our new Government is the first in the history of the world based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth." This language could not be applied to slavery. It would be a strange misapplication of terms to call slavery a physical, philosophical and moral truth. He had just been stating to his hearers that the ideas prevalent at the time our Federal Constitution

was formed "rested upon the assumption of the *equality of the races*." This proposition he declares to be unsound, and that the new Government was founded upon exactly the opposite idea. The error on one side which he combats is *the assumed equality of the races*. The opposite truth which he propounds is the physical, philosophical and moral truth, that *the two races are not equal*, and the inference he draws from this truth is that this physical difference determines the *status* of the inferior race. I confess I can not see how to escape that conclusion, except by denying the *inequality* of the races; by denying that there is this *physical difference* between them, for if there is this difference, then one race of necessity is superior, and the other inferior, and if the *two physically unequal* races are compelled to live together in the same community, the superior must govern the inferior. Can you avoid this conclusion?

THE CORNER-STONE CAN NOT BE REMOVED.

What prospect of success then is there, of any attempt to remove such a corner-stone? Who has constituted the two races physically different? There can be but one answer, it is God. To attempt, therefore, a removal of this corner-stone, which infinite wisdom has laid in the fabric of human society, is of so presumptuous a character, that few should be rash enough to undertake it. The *physical inequality of the races* then is this corner-stone, and not Slavery. Slavery, which is a *Government*, must be, in some form, the necessary result of this fact, and if you can remove the corner-stone, to wit, the *physical inequality of the races*, you may thus destroy slavery; but since the "Ethiopian can not change his skin," nor can any earthly power do it for him, so long as the two races exist together in the same community, you may change the master, or the relative position of the races, but one or the other will still be dominant. Slavery in America can only be abolished by *separating the races*.

Is it worth while to attempt to remove a corner-stone which God has laid?

The reasoning of Mr. Stevens has an apposite parallel in the reasoning of the elder Adams, on the Theory of Government, as given in his "Life by his grandson, C. F. Adams, the accomplished representative of our Government to the Court of St. James.

"Unlike most speculators on the *theory of Governments*, Mr. Adams begins by assuming *the imperfection of man's nature*, and introducing it at once as an element with which to compose his edifice.

"He finds *the human race impelled by their passions* as often as guided by their reason, sometimes led to good actions by scarcely corresponding motives, and sometimes to bad ones rather from inability to resist temptation than from natural propensity to evil. This is the *Corner-stone* of his system."

Let us put Mr. Adams' theory in the language of Mr. Stevens. "The foundations of Civil Government are laid, its corner-stone rests upon the great truth that *man has an imperfect nature*, that *the human race is impelled by their passions*, that, therefore, *subordination of the inferior to the superior*, inherent in the very nature of Government, is man's natural and moral condition. Civil Government is based upon this great physical, philosophical and moral truth." Would it be just to accuse Mr. Adams of basing Government on *Slavery*, as the corner-stone, because he admits the necessity of the *subordination of the inferior to the superior*? In other words, to make him utter the absurdity, that "*Government is the corner-stone of Government*"?

PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND MR. STEVENS PROCLAIM THE SAME CORNER-STONE.

Perhaps you may think I have adopted Southern views on this point, and that the inequality and physical differences of the two races are altogether Southern dogmas. I need not cross the Potomac to find the same great truth proclaimed in a quarter entitled to respect, and by one who politically outranks the Vice-President of the Con-

federacy, to wit, the President of the United States.

You will recollect the interview, on August fourteenth, 1862, between a committee of colored men and President Lincoln, invited by him, to hear what he had to say to them. His object in summoning them before him was to persuade them to *emigrate*, and he bases his argument to them on the very corner-stone declared by Mr. Stevens, to wit, the physical difference or inequality of the two races. President Lincoln's plan was to *separate the races*.

"You and we," said he to them, "are different races. We have between us a *broadier difference* than exists between almost any other two races. Whether it is right or wrong, I need not discuss, but this *physical difference* is a great disadvantage to us both, as I think. Your race are suffering, in my judgment, the greatest wrong inflicted on any people. But even when you cease to be slaves, you are far from being placed on an equality with the white race. On this broad continent not a single man of your race is made the equal of a single man of ours. Go where you are treated the best, and the ban is still upon you. I do not propose to discuss this, but to present it as a *fact* with which we have to deal. I can not alter it if I would. It is a *fact* about which we all feel and think alike, I and you."

THEIR DIFFERENT MODES OF DEALING WITH THE CORNER-STONE.

Thus you perceive that both President Lincoln and Mr. Stevens are in perfect accord in accepting and acting upon the same great truth. President Lincoln accepts the *physical inequality* of the two races, as completely as Mr. Stevens, for where there is a *broadier difference* than exists between almost any other two races, it would be absurd to say they are *equal*, especially when the President justly adds that this difference is *physical*, that is, grounded in the original constitution of each race. The only difference between the President of the United States and Mr. Stevens is in the use to which they put this physical, philosophical and moral truth,

this corner-stone. Mr. Stevens proposes it in his Savannah speech, as the basis of the new government; Mr. Lincoln adopts it as the basis of his plan of separating the races, because of this physical difference. Mr. Stevens takes the stone, as a whole, upon which he would construct a government. Mr. Lincoln would split the stone and drag the parts asunder. Mr. Stevens accepts the fact and adjusts his fabric to it. Mr. Lincoln also accepts the fact, and is perplexed with inextricable difficulties in his attempts to dispose of the two portions of the common corner-stone.

THE PRESIDENT'S PERPLEXITIES IN DEALING WITH THE CORNER-STONE.

It is well to notice these perplexities of the President's mind as they are manifested in his singular interview with this colored delegation. The great truth of the physical difference of the two races is so palpable that he can not controvert it, and he frankly declines to make the attempt, yet, while accepting the fact, he more than doubts the wisdom of the fact itself by raising the singular question of *right and wrong* upon its existence, and thus (no doubt unconsciously) impugns the wisdom of the Creator, for who but God could ordain a *physical* difference in the two races? The raising of the question, therefore, whether a *physical* fact is "right or wrong," as if there were two sides to such a question, directly implicates the wisdom of the Creator. The President, too, while declining to discuss this question of right and wrong, actually decides it to be wrong, by declaring it to be a "disadvantage to both" races, in his opinion. The plain good sense of most of the remarks of the President in this interview, and the collisions of thought in his own breast which he discloses, where truths and doubts come into constant conflict, point to some great radical disturbing error, not in the President's mind alone, but pervading the popular mind on the subject of African slavery every where.

THE GREAT ERROR OF THE WORLD ON SLAVERY.

The great fallacy, so rife every where

throughout the world, that *slavery is the cause of our national troubles*, rests on the almost universal persistent closing of the eyes to this fact of the physical difference between the two races. Slavery is not the cause of the sectional war, but a blind and mad resistance to a physical condition which God has ordained and which man is, in vain, attempting to subvert.

THE CORNER-STONE DULY ACKNOWLEDGED, SOLVES THE VEXED QUESTION OF SLAVERY.

Take your stand on this great acknowledged fact that the African and white races are physically different, follow out this truth to its logical result, and the question of slavery, or subordination of the inferior to the superior race, is clearly solved in all its phases.

Do you ask how?

First: We must accept as a fixed fact that ordinance of God which he has decreed, that the two races are *physically different*, and not complicate the fact, with any modifications, drawn from the prevalent visionary, infidel notions of an *equality* which has no existence, nor make any vain attempt to fix upon the mere relation of superior and inferior, or of rulers and ruled, moral or religious qualities which God in his word has not fixed to the relation.

Second: We must leave to each and every State in the Union where the two races exist together, whether in larger or smaller proportions, unmolested control over any adjustment of their relations to each other.

Third: In the kindly spirit of the Fathers of 1787, which they brought to the construction of our priceless Constitution, we should refrain from embittering the relations of the two races by an irritating busybodyism, a meddling interference with the manner in which the duties belonging to their relation to each other are or are not fulfilled, and taking the Apostle's counsel "to be quiet and mind our own business."

These three directions carried out in a Christian spirit faithfully, would restore the Union on the only basis on which it can ever be restored. Whether enlight-

ened reason can make its voice heard in this din of warring passions and interests, so that its "Peace be still," can calm the storm that is desolating us, is a question I will not pretend to answer. It is to the true, sober, Christian sentiment of the country when disenthralled from its entanglement with the delusive socialistic and infidel theories of the day, that we look with any hope for our national salvation.

I have dwelt at some length on this one point because of its paramount importance. It is a noticeable and gratifying circumstance that our President and the Vice-President of the Southern government are in accord on a fundamental principle. Union of opinion on one point, especially if that point be fundamental, is hopeful, and prophetic of further conciliation, perhaps pacification in the future. The great *physical* fact of the *broad difference* of the African and white races, which the President so justly and openly recognizes, lies at the root of the whole controversy respecting slavery. Let us, then, study the condition of things resulting from this truth in the light of an intelligent Christian philosophy, not viewing it through the distorted medium of Abolition spectacles, but with the clear vision of an eye spiritually enlightened, and a temper of heart which accepts a Providential fact with humility, recognizing the highest wisdom in all God's ordinances, however mysterious to us, endeavoring to adapt our ways to his facts, not his facts to our ways. In that temper of heart, you will clearly discern that this providential arrangement of conditions in human society has for its end a purpose of infinite and eternal good to both races, a purpose clearly discerned in the light of gospel truth, but wholly obscured in the smoke with which a proud but shallow infidel philosophy, a false Christianity, and pretentious humanitarianism have enshrouded the whole subject.

PROBABLE ENGLISH INTRIGUE TO PREVENT RE-UNION.

One word on your remark that the South "spurns all overtures of conciliation." When, where, and by whom have any overtures been made? When,

where, and by whom have they been spurned? If you take the intemperate speeches, the passionate flings in editorial and anonymous articles, in the Southern journals, as the exponents of the real sentiments of the Southern masses, are these the safe bases upon which to found your remarks? If so, by parity of reasoning, the Southern masses should take the "radical and infidel" ravings of the "Garrison stamp" which are their counterpart in the speeches, editorials, and anonymous articles of our newspapers. We have been accustomed to condemn the South for its false judgment of Northern sentiment, because formed from just such radical sources. These are very unsafe sources of information on each side in exciting times like these, on which to found intersectional sentiment. Let me hint at one latent danger from relying on such undiplomatic sources of information. Glance for a moment at the attitude of England towards the United States. We there see two well-defined parties, neither of them friendly to us as a nation, one the cotton interest siding with the South, and the other her abolition coteries siding with the North, and so, England, balancing herself adroitly between these two parties in her own island, safe from any dangerous collision between them, harmful to herself, through her administration can give aid in our deplorable strife to the one section or to the other, or to both, to prevent conciliation, as best may serve the great political purpose of England, *the permanent Division of the United States*. Keeping within the bounds of a quasi-neutrality, England can, on the one hand, furnish the South with munitions of war, and privateers to prey on Northern commerce, and on the other can get up abolition demonstrations at Exeter Hall and elsewhere, to strengthen and encourage the fanatical element of the North, as the vicissitudes of our unnatural war, manifest, in the one or the other section, any abatement of that ferocity of hate which she has for so long a period engendered and sedulously promoted as the sure means of ac-

complishing her political purpose of *permanent separation*.* Is it an unreasonable supposition that English emissaries at the South, supported from the "secret service fund," are the authors of those assumed spurnings of conciliatory overtures which you look upon as coming from the Southern heart? While this supposition, natural in the light of her past history, is not only *possible* but *probable*, I need better evidence than has yet appeared that the Southern masses, the great conservative body of the Southern people are really Disunionists. There is evidence on the contrary, that Union sentiment exists in the South, and would show its existence and activity, were it not stifled by the *unconstitutional* means which Northern, in alliance with English abolitionism, have brought to bear, to kill it.

I stop rather abruptly, possibly to my disadvantage, for I am compelled to leave untouched points perhaps necessary to prevent misapprehension. There is, however, a sentence in your letter, which I can not pass unnoticed, grounded, it appears, upon a remark of Mr. Field, casting an imputation upon the respectability and purity of intention of those associated with me in the effort to diffuse political knowledge. What Mr. Field may have said under the influence of that mendacious report of the *Post*, or what he may think of their characters, becomes of consequence only through your reiteration of his opinion. I notice it, therefore, (since you are in actual ignorance as well of the persons who were present, as of their social and moral position,) to say that neither could their respectability be enhanced, nor my own diminished by my association with them. I can not close without thanking you for your frank letter and expressions of neighborly and friendly interest, which I cordially reciprocate.

Truly, with respect and high personal esteem, your friend and neighbor,

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE.

EDWARD N. CROSBY, Esq.

* See note B.

NOTE A.

"*Politics* and the *pulpit* are terms that have little agreement. No sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of *civil liberty* and *civil Government* gains as little as that of *religion*, by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave and of the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, on which they pronounce with so much confidence, *they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite*. Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind."—BURKE: *Reflections on French Revolution*, vol. i. p. 460.

"I have something also to the *divines*, though brief, to what were needful, not to be *disturbers of the civil affairs*; being in hands better able, and more belonging, to manage them; but to study harder, and to attend the office of good pastors, knowing that he whose flock is least among them has a dreadful charge, not performed by mounting twice into the pulpit with a formal preachment huddled up at the odd hours of a whole lazy week, but by incessant pains and watching, in season and out of season, from house to house, over the souls whom they have to feed. Which, if they well considered, how little leisure would they find to be *the most pragmatistical sidesmen of every popular tumult and sedition*."—MILTON: *Treatise on Tenure of Kings, etc.*

NOTE B.

Let me ask your attentive reflection upon such indications of English designs and desires as the following. In an able article on the American Revolution, in the *Edinburgh Review* of Oct., 1862, the reviewer says: "We therefore say, without hesitation, that we wish the war to cease, and the *independence of the South to be established*."

Lord Campbell, in the House of Lords on the 4th of August, 1862, said: "It is not too much to say that *no class or party* in the country any longer desires to see the reconquest of the South and the *reconstruction of the Union*." The reviewer says: "At the outset of the struggle the tendency was strong in England to side with the North. On the other hand, *many felt undoubted satisfaction at the breaking up of that great democratic Govern-*

ment, whose institutions had been held up to them by their own reformers as a model of perfection," etc. The reviewer puts the question: "Is it the interest of the civilized world, and especially of our own country, (England,) that the American Union should be restored?" And he answers it by saying: "It can scarcely be said that the relations of the *American Union* to Europe, and to England in particular, have been so satisfactory as to make us *anxious for its continuance*."

Further on he says: "The feeling in England is not founded on a desire of vengeance or personal retribution on any one, for insults which we have received. It rests on a much more calm and rational basis—that is to say, on the conviction that the *unity of the Government at Washington alone made the blow tell*; it is hoped that when that unity is gone, all insults of the kind, if not so impolitic as to be avoided altogether, *will at least be harmless, and of no consequence to England*." In another place: "The independence of the South would open new markets for our manufactures, without the previous restrictions of *Federal tariffs*."

These extracts, from the most intelligent exponents of public opinion in England, could be multiplied to any extent. I give one or two only from the *North British Review* of February, 1862: "Most Englishmen, and ourselves among the number, have arrived at the conclusion, not only that the Secessionists *will* succeed in their enterprise, but that *this success will, eventually, be of the most signal service to humanity, to civilization, and to the cause of universal and enduring peace*."

Again: "We entertain, then, no doubt that the *dissolution of the Union* is an accomplished and irreversible fact, and one of the very greatest facts of our day. We can see no grounds on which the *continuance of that Union should be desired by any wise or good man*."

Again: "That the independence of the South and the *dissolution of the great Republic* are accomplished and irreversible facts, seems to us undeniable. The nation founded by Washington is severed—the Union contrived by his wisdom, and consecrated by his name, is *at an end*. We have now to ask what beauty there was in it that we should have longed for its continuance? What sacred purpose did it serve that we should deplore its end?"

These are specimens only indicating the bias of English sentiment, and showing that the English Government looks with exultation on the success of its plot of dividing our Union. Is this then the time for *persistence in unconstitutional acts* which must inevitably create further rendings and divisions?